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MAXIMS BY A MAN OF THE WORLD.

OPINION.

PERHAPS the best test of a man's being a Man of the World (in the best sense of that expression) is found in the manner in which he behaves himself in matters of opinion: how he expresses his own views, and how he receives the views of others who happen to differ from him. It is impossible for a man who has really mixed much with a variety of his fellow-creatures to remain a bigot—or, at all events, an offensive one—in this respect. You may see a great deal of folks of your own kidney, and yet—just as a chess-player may not only not improve, but deteriorate by constantly playing with those who have but one plan—you may only grow more obstinate and besotted; and you may travel to the ends of the earth, as a Jesuit missionary, for instance, and only, 'like copper-wire, become the narrower by going further,' because illiterate and savage folks have no opinions to be called so, and in comparison with their childish notions, your own ideas seem of incalculable value. But a man who has passed his days among civilised and intelligent persons, of various callings, and has avoided falling into that quicksand of cultivated existence, a Clique, may be always depended upon not to create any discomfort by his mode of stating his own opinions, and generally even upon putting down any other person inclined to offend the company by uncharitable violence. Indeed, a genuine Man of the World may be looked upon as a sort of special constable for the preservation of peace and quietness, and the maintenance of social enjoyment, against brawlers; a very different sort of fellow, be it remarked, from him who often usurps the title of Man of the World upon the ground that one opinion is as good as another, since there is nothing new, nor true, and everything is a bore. This last individual is generally a finicking creature, who, if he did not chance to have been born to a 'good position'—that of a guardsman or an unpaid attaché—would have found his proper position as a man-milliner.

The expression of opinion among men, when

socially gathered together, does not take place, as a general rule, until 'the ladies have withdrawn.' Of all the allegations that have been so ungallantly urged against the fair sex, it seems to me that this is the best founded—that they do not interest themselves at all in matters which are most worth talking about. They are thinking of their dress, and (especially) thinking of what the other women are thinking of it. 'They overwhelm society,' says an American writer, 'with superfluous dry goods. When ladies are present, the whole affair becomes a mere question of costume. . . . They dress, too, not for the purpose of giving pleasure to men, but for that of inflicting pain on one another. Besides, a lady who is carrying a considerable estate upon her person must devote a great part of her attention to the management of the estate. She may be talking to Mr Smith about Shakspeare and the musical glasses, but the thing her mind is really bent upon is crushing Mrs Smith with her new lace.' This is mainly true, except that it is rare to hear ladies talk of Shakspeare, unless the Prince and Princess of Wales may chance to have lately patronised one of his plays. Similarly, they do not speak of any religious question, unless some favourite clergyman has been recently ventilating it; nor have they any interest in politics (beyond a general apprehension that genteel institutions are in danger, and that there is even a possibility of there being no House of Lords), unless their husband or brother has been concerned of late with the blue side or the yellow. Now, men (though there are more dull men, perhaps, than dull women, and though men have certainly the gift of prosing in a more full degree) do, to do them justice, take interest in other matters beside merely personal ones. Every one of them, however intellectually insignificant, has his own notions of how the state ought to be governed, and even of the eternal principles on which the administration of the universe is conducted. Each is prepared to go to the stake upon such abstract questions as the rights of property, the training of horses, the benefits which guano confers on crops, the state provision for the poor, the genius of Mr

Browning, the voluntary theological system, and the Vintages.

Of course, the ideas expressed are often queer enough, but, however worthless in themselves, they are characteristic of their professors. They indicate at once to the intelligent observer what sort of man he has to deal with, and, as it were, buoy for him the channels of conversation, while the less sagacious skippers, unobservant of these danger-signals, go bumping, and grounding, and colliding, till the confusion becomes inextricable, and there is perhaps a Row.

I am only speaking of London life, for in the country there is no great variety of after-dinner Man; but let us just consider the divers kinds of opinions that one hears expressed over the mahogany, from Notting Hill to Russell Square, and from Kilburn to Eaton Square.* While the ladies continue with us, the talk is smooth and shallow, and the winds of controversy are hushed; but no sooner has the last ample skirt swept round the dining-room door, than General Chowler, C.B., who has gallantly risen with the rest, but violently resents even that small amount of exertion after food, inquires huskily whether any man ever heard such sickening and treasonable rubbish as was talked by that fellow Bright in the House last night, on the question of reduction of the army estimates. Mr Eugene Mildmay, who has just hitched his chair into the space left between him and the general by the departure of his late neighbour, here latches it back again, and proceeds to observe, with unctuous distinctness, that, so far as he is from thinking Mr Bright's scheme to be treasonable, he considers it most reasonable, since a standing army in any form is a standing reproach to a country; but an army which is officered by purchase, if it were not such a grievous injustice, may be called a standing joke.

Now, the Man of the World, although his own opinion may be far from coinciding with that of either of these gentlemen, does not set each of them down in his own mind, at once, as a fool or a fanatic. He finds something to agree with in both of them, or, at all events, nothing to quarrel about in either; and he well knows, that but for the indiscreet violence of the general, the member of the Peace Society would not have used the most offensive weapons of speech which he could lay his tongue to. He calms their mutual animosities ('Saves bloodshed' even, says the host, when afterwards expressing his acknowledgments to this skilful arbiter), and presently discovers in Chowler a mine of really humorous anecdote, and opens in Mildmay a vein of sparkling epigram. That each is still convinced in his own mind that the other ought in the interests of society to be hung, does not prevent the party from 'going off' with pleasant geniality after all.

The possession of extreme opinions is no harm in anybody, nor even the expression of them, provided that all personality is avoided; it does not require a Man of the World to keep clear of this, but it does require a gentleman. If men are so unhappily constituted as to be impatient of all ideas that are antagonistic to their

own, they should dine at home, and only ask guests who agree with them. They have no right to accept an invitation to join a mixed company, since they are wanting in what every guest is supposed to come furnished with—namely, a courteous forbearance. They would not think of coming in their shirt-sleeves; why, then, should they venture to come, when they are conscious that they do not possess the decent mantle of charity. Of course, no man who is in a position to be asked out to dinner gives his neighbour the lie direct: I refer to behaviour a little less coarse than that, but equally offensive. For instance, suppose (for one may suppose anything) that my views happen to be strongly in favour of authority; suppose I am an upholder of the powers that be even in somewhat extreme cases; suppose I greatly admire the aristocracy of my native land; and suppose I express those opinions. It would be something much worse than bad taste if an after-dinner adversary should hint in reply that snobs, or toadies, or sycophants were the particular objects of his dislike; for it would be impossible to misunderstand the personal application of his remarks, and of course to avoid resenting them. Or, on the other hand, suppose I am a 'despiser not of dignities (for that is forbidden), but of the people who fill them,' and express a wish that there was no such thing as an Hereditary Chamber. It would then be a most disgraceful reply in my antagonist to say, that he had always found that persons who affected to dislike lords, were the most servile towards them in their behaviour, and were only hostile to persons of title because they themselves possessed no handles to their names.

By such ruffianly replies as these, nothing whatever is gained from the adversary except an irreconcilable enmity, while the harmony of the company, which all are bound by the laws of hospitality to maintain, is marred for the evening. Of course, such outrageous conduct is not usual; but I am sorry to say it does occasionally occur. In the country, indeed, it is quite usual to quarrel upon politics, although in London we very properly hold it to be a mark of bad-breeding. We agree where we can, and where no point of sympathy is to be found, we agree to differ. Still, that vast and opaque body of persons who pique themselves on their 'common-sense,' and especially on their Protestantism (right of protesting), greatly resent what they call 'extreme opinions'; that is, opinions of any kind which project beyond either end of their intellectual foot-rule. They are probably unaware that in all ages, the most intelligent persons among all communities have entertained opinions beyond the average standard of measurement, at both ends; but if they knew it, it would make no difference; there is a complacency about them which leaves nothing to be desired on the score of self-contentment, only unhappily it is so easily ruffled. They resent equally Messrs Carlyle-and-Congreve's Intelligent Despotism, my Lord Salisbury's Aristocratic Supremacy, Mr Mill's Economical Panaceas, Mr Bright's Democratic Remedies, and Mr Ruskin's Sentimental Theories; whereas, all that they have a right to do, when seated at the genial board, is to disagree with them. Resentment ought to have no place at a gentleman's dinner-table; and no opinion should be so expressed as to provoke it.

But the entertainment and expression of free

* It is noticeable, by the by, that the wildest notions are always to be found in the most cultivated places.

opinion is the very life-blood of intellectual existence. Even when men's views are clothed in too forcible and extravagant language (always provided that no personal offence is intended), the true Man of the World regards them with charitable eyes, and makes a due allowance. When the poor's-rate so increases in a gentleman's parish as to cause him, for instance, to state his conviction that nothing but the direst experience will check the improvidence of the poor; that he really thinks (albeit there is no stancher friend to Christianity, as by law established, than himself, even down to that branch of it called the Irish Church) it would be better, on the whole, that people should be left to starve to death in the streets, for a generation or two, the Man of the World resists the temptation of telling him that he is a disgrace to his species, because he is well aware that the truculent speaker has no more intention of speaking literally, than had the fopling of Wycherley's time when he adjured society to 'stap his vitals.'

The ability to place one's self in the position of others, is a rare gift; if it were otherwise, the world would be a more agreeable one; we should then have neither Amalgamated Masters nor Trades' Unions, and the Clergyman and the Sinner would understand one another much better than they do; but he who has mixed with varieties of men has had his eyes opened to at least this important fact, that a fellow-creature may entertain opinions that are antagonistic to his own, and may even express them with some warmth, and yet not be a wholly unmitigated scoundrel after all. 'Human life,' observes a certain philosopher, at the close, as it would seem, of a long experience of muscular and sensuous pleasure, 'is not *all* Beer and Skittles;' nor is it all Ritualism and Early Rising; nor all Prudence and Accumulation of Capital; nor all Swelldom and Inanity; nor all Jobbing and Place; nor all Hard Work and its Reward. But it is something made up of all these things, and of a million of others. 'Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass, stains the white radiance of eternity,' complains the most poetic of poets; but the Man of the World makes no complaint, but adapts himself to the various hues as best he can. He has his own glasses, of course (not by any means rose-coloured ones), through which he gazes, if not, alas! upon 'the white radiance of eternity,' at all events, upon the world without, but he is not so unreasonable as to be angry, if it seems to others of a different hue. Nay, he likes a man to have his own opinion; since, in these days of cliques, and coteries, and personal followings—when, even in religious belief, it is so common to hear men say: 'Well, I don't go so far as So-and-so, or So-and-so'—it is as refreshing as mountain-air to find one's neighbour at the dinner-table to be one who takes the trouble to think for himself.

If any further argument be necessary to shew that all opinion in social life has a right to be expressed, and that men should exercise a courteous charity in its reception, I may mention this one: that, as with respect to the human form it is asserted that in every seven years it suffers so complete a change that nothing of the original belongs to it, thus social opinion, in much less time, so grows and broadens, that no ancient land-mark is anywhere recognisable, while the very places which men marked as extreme limits, and on which they took their stand, and said: 'Up

to this point shall the wave of freedom rise, but no further,' are, in seven years, 'full fathom five' under water.

FIVE BROTHERS' FIVE FIXES.

PART V.—CHARLES THE BARRISTER'S FIX.

'I *HARDLY* like relating my fix,' I began, 'for at first sight there appears to be something dishonourable and ungentelemanly about it; but really, when the matter is explained, you will all see that I was more sinned against than sinning—that the whole thing was more a thoughtless overflow of the exuberant spirits of careless young men, than an intention to do anything wrong—and that, when the fix placed me clearly in a dishonourable position, I acted honourably. It was, however, a warning to me on a subject that I dare say Brother Ned often preaches about—namely, if you begin anything wrong, you never can tell where you will be carried. To give you a slight clue to what is coming, let me just add, that instead of losing a wife or wives by my fix, it was by that very predicament that I gained mine.

'You will remember that I was always considered a very pretty boy; and in early days, when we were all children, you used to say that I ought to have been a girl. When I was about twenty-one years old, I was staying one long vacation with some friends of mine in the 110th Regiment, then quartered in Ireland. In the regiment, there was a certain Captain Dundee, who was rather a heavy, stupid fellow, though a pretty good officer, and who prided himself upon being very sharp. He used to boast that nobody could take him in, and that he would recognise a person in any conceivable disguise. I was very intimate with Captain Dundee, and so far from thinking him very sharp, I used to abuse him for his stupidity, and was always chaffing him on the subject.

'One evening at mess, when Captain Dundee was not present, bets were made that I could not pass an evening in his company dressed as a lady without his discovering the trick. I betted that I could do so. Many officers took my side, and at last it ended in very heavy bets indeed being made, not by me, but, what was worse, by my friends, for I felt that their losing or gaining almost a fortune depended entirely on me. As the day drew near, these bets were doubled. I quite trembled for the result. I may mention that, though I did not know it, almost all these bets were fictitious, and only proclaimed for the sake of keeping me up to the mark. In fact, those concerned thoughtlessly wanted to have a jolly lark, and were afraid of my backing out. As it was, I felt that about fifteen thousand pounds in bets depended on my getting through the evening safely in my assumed character as a young lady.

'Captain Dundee had married a young, larky, care-for-nothing, stick-at-nothing Irish girl. I do not at all mean to say that she was really bad; but, from thoughtlessness, from a not overrefined nature, and from very exuberant, uncontrolled spirits, she would rush into a scrape, little thinking or caring about the consequences, or how she should get out of it successfully. The bet was, that the first evening Mr Fenwick could get an invitation for himself and an imaginary niece, Miss Fenwick, to dine with the Dundeas, I was to

personate, or attempt to personate, the niece; and the said bet, moreover, was to the effect that I should successfully deceive Captain Dundee till such time as the party separated, however late the hour might be.

Without my knowledge, Mrs Dundee was let into the secret; hence all my trouble. She, in her wild Irish way, quite entered into the joke, and at once determined to make confusion worse confounded.

Very soon a note came, stating that Captain and Mrs Dundee requested the pleasure of the company of Mr and Miss Fenwick to dinner in a quiet way on the 10th instant. Only one or two brother-officers were coming. The fatal day arrived. Remember, I thought that thousands depended on the result, and that Mrs Dundee was as ignorant as her husband of my intended appearance. Imagine me with a profusion of false black curls; a flower or two stuck here and there; no end of lady's jewellery—rings, ear-rings, brooch, &c.; a thin muslin dress, with high body; my face skillfully painted. In fact, I was altogether very well made up by a first-rate hand sent for from Dublin. Partly to keep up my courage and get me up to the mark, and partly because I knew that in my assumed character I must not drink much wine, I imbibed a considerable quantity before I started. Moreover, in a secret pocket, I concealed a small flask of brandy, with which I hoped to be able to keep up my spirits on the sly.

At table, I played my part well. I talked and flirted, chattered about dancing and so forth, and protested I was mad about balls. Poor wretch that I was, I wish I had held my tongue; I was unwittingly rushing to destruction. I drank as much champagne as I dared in my assumed character, and thought everything was going all right, and that my friends were quite sure to win their money. Scarcely had the cloth been removed, when Mrs Dundee said: "I have a pleasing surprise for you all, good people. A few days ago, I received an invitation from Sir George and Lady Clonmell to a ball at their house this evening, with permission to bring any of my friends. Sir George lives twelve miles off. Dundee has secured the large omnibus from the inn, and ordered four horses, and we are to start at nine o'clock. We can all go together: we shall have a jolly evening, and I am delighted to think that you will be able to enjoy yourself, Miss Fenwick."

"Good gracious! how my heart sank within me. My bet held good till the time we all separated. My friends must lose their money. I could never get through a ball, I knew. I said my dress was high, and would not do for a ball."

"My maid," said Mrs Dundee, "shall dress you in one of my evening-dresses."

"No, that she shan't," I almost shrieked out: "if I must go, I will go just as I am. I am so delicate that the doctors will not allow me to wear a low dress."

"Perhaps, dear, you would like her to dress your hair differently; she is very clever; or to put another wreath on your head?"

"O no; thank you," said I; and most bitterly did I inwardly abuse my luck, but I almost gasped: "If you have a spare room where I could wash my hands, and just put my hair straight for myself, I should be very much obliged."

"I was shewn into a room, and sat down the very picture, I am sure, of despair. It now began to flash

across me too, that what was, to say the least, a not overcreditable joke among a few larky brother-officers, would be very dishonourable if practised on society at large; that it would be very wrong of me to go to a ball at Sir George's disguised as a young lady; that I might get into some awkward scene; that I might be the means of unintentionally causing pain and shame to some ladies. O dear! I was doubting in my mind whether I should be taken suddenly ill, and have myself conveyed home; or whether I should send for Mrs Dundee, and make a clean breast of it; little thinking that all the time the wretch knew my fix. But then my friends would lose fifteen thousand pounds. O horrible! Just at that moment my hand unluckily touched the pocket in which was my flask; to pull it out and drain it was only the work of a moment or two. My courage returned at once; my spirits rose only too rapidly; I would go through with it, I would win. My scruples vanished into thin air—I forgot them. I was not drunk, but terribly excited.

Soon the lady's-maid entered with hot water, brushes, &c. I remember I felt very much inclined to chuck her under the chin, and ask her to get me some more brandy on the sly. The mere thought, however, steadied me at once as it struck me how nearly I had made a mess of the whole matter. I sat down before the glass, touched up my hair, somewhat composed my flushed face, shook out my skirts, rinsed my mouth with Eau de Cologne, to remove the smell of brandy, and put scent on a new lace pocket-handkerchief I had borrowed from Mrs Dundee. I had often acted a lady's part in private theatricals, and was tolerably *au fait* at my work. When I descended to the drawing-room, Mrs Dundee looked me over. Oh, how I shuddered when she touched one of my curls, and wished to put it quite straight. Knowing as she did my assumed character, she must have been mightily amused at the way in which I said: "O please, don't. I hate all finishing-touches of every kind."

"In due course of time, the four-horse 'bus came round, and we drove to Sir George Clonmell's. My spirits had again sunk to zero; I feared I should not be able to keep up my character, and instinctively I felt I was doing wrong. O those horrible bets! There were several of the 110th in the room. I danced with two. One was in my secret, the other was not. Any one who had overheard us would have been amazed at the conversation between my partner who was in the secret and myself.

"Fred, my boy, when will supper come? Do take me to some room where I can get some bitter beer or something to drink."

"Can't do it, old fellow, at any price: you would be found out, and I should lose my money: you must get on as best you can without drink."

"But I am dying with thirst; I can't hold on till supper-time, and my pluck is oozing out at my finger-ends, for I feel I am in a mess, and I am sure I shall put my foot into it, and be discovered, if I do not get some stimulant to keep me up."

"Can't help it, my boy; you must do your best. I tell you what you had better do—smuggle your flask out of your pocket, and give it to me; I will fill it with sherry; and then, while you and I take the one turn together on the terrace which propriety allows, you must contrive to drink it."

"Soon supper was announced, and I felt better. If, however, my partner, who was Fred, had not been in the secret, he would have been perfectly astonished to see how very much I ate, and how very many glasses I drank on the sly when I thought nobody was noticing. Fred watched one side of the table, and I the other. When he thought no one was looking, he would give me a kick; and if I was satisfied that I was not watched on my side, down went the champagne in the twinkling of an eye.

"At length the company began to disperse, and rather quickly too, for rain was pouring, and an awful thunder-storm evidently coming on. I heard more than one anxious parent hasten their charge away with: "Come, come, my dear; you must come now, or, as papa says, we shall be obliged to stay here all night."

"The words did not strike me much at the moment, but did they not afterwards? Soon the storm broke: it was something frightful; and after the severity of the thunder and lightning had spent itself, the rain came down in torrents, and gave every sign of continuing to pour in that way for some hours. Sir George and Lady Clonmell would not hear of the few guests who remained going home. "Such weather! no one ever saw anything like it: the river was swollen, the ford impassable. The house was very large; the young ladies could sleep two in a bed" (O goodness, how my heart sank!); "the bachelors must rough it for once; the cushions in the smoking-room and billiard-room were very soft."

"A few desperate, and, as I thought, happy people would go. Mrs Dundee easily persuaded her husband to stop. What on earth was I to do? My face shewed the mess I was in, for one of my friends came, and whispered to me: "Keep your pluck up, old boy; a few more minutes, and you will have won your bet, for you are sure to be separated from old Dundee, and may," he wickedly added, "perhaps be joined to some one better." Oh, how I did inwardly abuse everything and everybody. The sleeping arrangements were soon made. Of course, unless compelled by circumstances, I was not going to state who I was. It struck me that Mrs Dundee, who was a great friend of Lady Clonmell, rather favoured me. Hurrah! it ended that I was to sleep alone in a tiny little bedroom, close to that of Captain and Mrs Dundee. Hurrah! thought I; I will lock my door, set all the ladies' maids at defiance, and throw myself to-morrow on Mrs Dundee for help and protection, with an ample confession and apology, for she must at any rate, in a few days, know the truth, and she will help me out of my mess and out of the house.

"Good-night, Lady Clonmell!"—"Good-night, my dear Miss Fenwick; I hope you will sleep comfortably."

"My conscience smote me, as the kind-hearted, impulsive old Irish lady kissed my forehead.

"I was alone in my bedroom; I had not locked my door, because I was waiting till the lady's-maid had called and asked if she could do anything more for me. Of course, a decided peremptory, "No, I thank you," would have been the answer. And there I sat with my elbows, in a most unladylike manner, on both my knees, my head filled with the most unmaidenly thoughts.—They were compounded of a semi-prayer of thankfulness to the presiding genius of luck for having pulled me, as I thought, quite through my scrape, and a

mixture of doubt as to whether I had better trust the heathen deity of 'Baccy, and smoke a couple of cigars out of my open window, or for once in a way chew a bit. Tobacco in some shape I felt I must have, to soothe my excited nerves.

"A knock at the door. "Come in," and I added to myself: "It is only that *bête noir* of a lady's-maid. I will dismiss her, and then hey for 'baccy.'" She did come in, but not the lady's-maid was she. Radiant with beauty, exquisitely flushed with excitement, robed in a most charming dressing-gown, with hair hanging down her back, there entered a young lady I had been introduced to, and who had rather taken my fancy, in the course of the evening—one Miss Evenlode."

"What! Charles; why, that was your wife's maiden name," ejaculated more than one of the circle who were assembled in the parson's study listening to my fix.

My wife looked sheepish; but I went on. "Do not interrupt me; hear me out. "O dear Miss Fenwick," said Miss Evenlode, "I am so sorry to disturb you, but you know what a state of confusion the house is in, and I find somebody else has got my bedroom. I have been undoing my hair in Aunt Clonmell's room, and now she has sent me here to say, with her love, that she hopes you will allow me to share your chamber. She knows, Miss Fenwick, as Mrs Dundee told her, that you have always been accustomed to be alone, and cannot bear anybody in the room; but she hopes that, under the circumstances of the case, you will excuse her request this time. And we shall be so jolly together; won't we talk over our partners, and quiz them nicely!"

"The girl spoke in a very lively, natural manner, but did not particularly look at me. Had she done so, she must have noticed that I was almost choking—black in the face—going into a fit. "Good Heavens, Miss Evenlode, I can't, I shan't, I won't—you must not, you ought not—O dear!" In the horrible embarrassment of the moment, I covered my eyes with my hands. Miss Evenlode seemed struck dumb with astonishment, and no wonder. "You must go," I said; "I can't, I won't have you here."

"Of course," she replied, "I will go if you wish it, and tell my aunt, Lady Clonmell, what you say; but I have had such trouble to avoid being seen by those horrible men, that I must wait a bit to see if the coast is clear. You see the men are very well in their way, and I enjoy dancing with them; but I should not like to be caught by them looking the fright I am now."

"I groaned audibly, and shivered with shame. I could not tell what was the right thing for me to do. Another knock at the door—no, not a knock, a bump and an entrance without permission. Enter Mrs Dundee.

"I know what's the matter," said she; "I have known the secret all along.—Miss Fenwick, pardon me, for the fix I have rather unwittingly led you into.—Miss Evenlode, Miss Fenwick is a man and a gentleman," she added with emphasis.—As for Miss Evenlode, she seemed inclined to faint.—"His being here in this disguise," continued Mrs Dundee, "has been brought about by a chain of circumstances quite unlooked for by him, and not expected by me. If you will take my advice, Miss Evenlode, you will come with me, and keep your own counsel about this silly business. Nothing short of perfect silence will prevent awkwardness

(to say the least of it) to everybody. Miss Fenwick, who is Mr Charles Temple, will leave early to-morrow with me. I will stop my husband's mouth. You can tell Lady Clonmell to-morrow that when you came to Miss Fenwick's room you found it quite empty. Ere long, part of the story may come out. If your aunt thinks at all about it, she will think that Mr Temple was a gentleman, and never even went into his room at all, but contrived to shift for himself elsewhere."

"Miss Evenlode fell in with the plan, which, under the circumstances, was a wise one. During the few moments that followed, but one remark was made. "Miss Evenlode," I said, "I grieve that through my folly, for it deserves no harsher name, you should be in such a fix."

"Mr Charles Temple," said she laughing, "do not trouble yourself about me. I am very sorry for you, for I think that yours is the *biggest fix of all*."

"The Miss Evenlode of those days is now my wife, and, as Mrs Charles Temple, is at this moment sitting before you."

And so ended our last story. My wife was immediately appealed to, to corroborate, as she fully did, the truth of what I had narrated. Ere long, the company separated, and the five brothers were soon in dreamland, their minds wandering possibly among the scenes of their Five Fixes.

WHAT TO DO WITH MY SONS!

WHAT is to be done with gentlemen's sons, is a question of growing difficulty. The old 'genteel professions' are getting overdone. *Paterfamilias* is beginning very naturally to inquire whether it will be prudent for him to spend a great sum on his son's education for a profession in which it is a bare chance if the youth will ever come to any good. Educate him to be a lawyer—he may never get a brief, or miserably hang on for years, picking up now and then a few guineas. Make him a doctor—what a struggle to get into practice. Rear him for the church—worse and worse. Fathers of even a lofty turn of mind seem now inclined to look at these things commercially. They put the costs on one side, and the hazards on the other—and pause. We know a duke who has sent his younger son into a counting-house, there to rise by his skill and assiduity. And this is only one of many such facts. The attainment of wealth and social eminence through commercial pursuits and colonial enterprise is acquiring a significant prominence. The old professions are falling relatively behind. There was a time when a parish clergyman could keep pace with landed proprietors of a moderate standard. He can now barely do so with the farmers, and possibly, in point of means, falls behind the village grocer. In all this, there is food for reflection. Parents are puzzled. They are turning their eyes in the direction of trade. Goldsmith's delicate satire, 'If you wish a genteel profession, bind yourself seven years to turn a cutler's wheel,' is, after all, becoming a reasonable recommendation.

Latterly, fathers of families, in their bewilderment, have been clutching at what is called the 'Indian Civil Service.' There is here a 'new opening,' and it is worth while to inquire about it. India stands in need of a yearly supply of young men to help in carrying on the civil government of that distant dependency. They are required to fill the office of clerks, agents, and judges, for

which they require to be well educated. Formerly, these appointments were made by patronage, or favour, a system which proved far from satisfactory. Now, everything is done by the plan of competitive examination. It is a race open to all runners. Such is the principle of the thing; that the sons of the poor, as well as of the rich, may start in the course; only, there is this trifling qualification, that such must necessarily be the extent and costliness of the preparatory education, that the sons of persons of very small means must be left out of the question. Not but what there are prodigies of genius in comparatively humble life, who, by a sort of intuition, and at hardly any expense, distance everybody; but, unfortunately, the world is not made up of prodigies of that kind, and money, time, and labour are generally indispensable for success.

It must be owned that there is something broad and liberal in the Regulations. 'Any natural-born subject of her Majesty shall be entitled to compete,' provided he produce satisfactory certificates as to health and character, and be within the prescribed age—which at present is from seventeen to twenty-one. There are three annual examinations, about the month of April. A lad failing the first year, may try a second and a third. If he do not then succeed, he is irremediably 'plucked.' But what is the standard of proficiency? Therein, we have some difficulty. The gaining of the largest number of marks, is, we believe, the rule; but there is no aggregate maximum as to the number, which may be high or low according to circumstances.

The subjects of the examination are: the English language, literature, and history; composition; the Greek, Latin, French, German, and Italian languages, with their respective histories and literature; mathematics, pure and mixed; natural science, of which five branches are specified; moral science; Sanscrit language and literature; and Arabic language and literature. It should be remarked that none of the subjects is obligatory—a candidate being at perfect liberty to take two or three, or to take half-a-dozen if he likes. Three or four subjects are commonly selected.

The strange feature of the whole affair is the system of marking. For every distinct subject, there is a specified number of marks. For example, English Literature has 500; Sanscrit, 350; Latin, 750; and Mathematics, 1250. In every subject—with the single exception of mathematics—the first 125 marks the candidate obtains do not count, unless, indeed, he secure the number assigned to the subject—which number, however, is rarely if ever attained. There is, as already said, no aggregate maximum; neither is there any obligation to be up to the maximum in any one subject. As far as we can understand it, a candidate who selects, say four subjects, may attain a sufficient number of marks from proficiency in two or three of them. He may pass on account of his knowledge of Mathematics, Latin, and Sanscrit, and know next to nothing of English history or literature.

The examinations are conducted under the most rigorous conditions. No one is allowed to consult any book or paper brought with him, or to get assistance from others. He must depend entirely on himself, and answer on the spur of the moment questions which positively turn one dizzy to look at. What can be meant by requiring this prodigious

erudition? To answer correctly and fully only a small number of the questions on the different subjects propounded, would involve a degree of technical and varied knowledge which goes beyond all ordinary acquirements; for as no candidate knows beforehand what he is to be asked, he must carry a whole encyclopædia in his head, in order to be ready for what may be demanded of him. We would not like to speak with severity of what is doubtless well meant, yet cannot help saying, that the routine of examination, as we have heard it described, has something of an air of cruelty. It seems like taking advantage of a parcel of lads who are so indiscreet as to seek for bread in this highly extolled 'service.' At all events, it must strike every one who knows anything of the world, that sound intelligence, along with a capacity for conducting public and private affairs, is not secured by endowing the memory with a means of answering minute questions in almost every department of human knowledge. So far as our experience goes, 'dungeons of learning' seem to be a very handless sort of individuals, unfitted for the battle of life. What might be presumed to be wanted for places of responsible trust in India are not moping scholars with loads of pedantic learning at their fingertips, but well-informed men, possessing an aptitude for judicial and other business. It does not seem absurd to ask those who are at the head of this brilliant 'service,' where is the special use (except as a mere test of intelligence) for a profound knowledge of mathematics in a man who is to sit as a judge in determining points of civil or criminal law?

Considering the cost which must, in usual circumstances, be undergone for the education of candidates, the rigour of the competitive examination, and the slight chance of success, the wonder to us is that the system meets with support. The number of candidates was last year two hundred and seventy-nine. This year, three hundred and twenty gave in their names, but only two hundred and ninety-three presented themselves. As last year there were only about fifty vacancies, it follows that little more than one out of every five candidates attained success.

Much has been said as to the magnificent prospects of the successful competitors. But what do those prospects amount to? Success is not immediately followed by an appointment. There is more to learn, more time to be lost, and more money to be expended. After a candidate passes his examinations successfully, he is detained in this country for two years, during which time he is examined periodically (every three or six months, we believe), to test his progress in his prescribed studies—namely, Sanscrit, the vernacular language of the presidency to which he is to proceed, law, history, geography of India, and political economy. During this time also the student is expected to attend the law-courts, and take notes of a certain number of cases, and acquire a general knowledge of the mode of judicial procedure in English law. At the end of the two years, there is a final examination, which, if the selected candidate fail to pass, he will in no case be allowed to present himself for re-examination. It therefore may happen that not only the whole of the preliminary education, but also all the subsequent study while a probationer, may go for nothing. A money outlay first and last of probably fifteen hundred to two

thousand pounds may be little better than thrown away. And as for the amount of toil, study, and heart-breaking anxiety, how can it be estimated? As an inducement to undertake the risk of probationary study, after passing the ordeal of examination, the Secretary of State for India has seen fit to allow selected candidates L.100 for the first, and L.200 for the second year of probation. Is it borne in mind that the interest of the capital sunk on education is pretty nearly a loss of L.100 a year in perpetuity?

A great deal is said of the glorious prospects in India! In Bengal, the salary, on arrival, is L.396 per annum; in Bombay, about L.325; and in Madras, L.300; and 'the salaries rise not by tens or twenties, but by hundreds of pounds per annum.' Ultimately, the judgeship may be worth L.1000 per annum. Yet, in our opinion, all this may be dearly bought—a state of personal restriction against which independent feeling revolts, precious years of youth sacrificed, long years of exile among barbarians in a climate which is for the most part adverse to comfort, and destructive of human life, and the possibility of returning home when past middle life with a diseased liver, to find all your old friends dead and gone, and yourself a stranger in the land of your birth. Such is the Indian Civil Service. That so many as three hundred lads with good connections should offer themselves as candidates annually, testifies in an extraordinary degree to the want of high-class openings for youth, as well as the reluctance to follow out some line of industry which, with plain common-sense, and a fair share of skill and diligent perseverance, might lead, if not to fortune, at least to a reasonable competence.

BLONDEL PARVA.

CHAPTER IX.—THE FACE AT THE WINDOW.

RICHARD ANSTEY was only just in time. The tide of the sick man's life was almost at its lowest ebb; and there was to be no more flow. His face wore that unmistakable look of farewell on which the coffin-lid is soon to lie. At a glance from him, for he had no breath to spare, nor strength to make sign, Margaret left the room, and uncle and nephew were alone.

Richard drew quite close to the pillow, and waited patiently—and perhaps with some touch of pity—his advantage in youth and health over this poor sinking wretch was so enormous—for the struggling lips to speak. 'Give me brandy, Dick.'

The baronet had not called his nephew by that familiar name since he had grown up to manhood, and the hard face softened for a moment, as it listened. Years ago, when he was a school-boy, and before certain disagreements had taken place, Sir Nicholas had been kind to him after his fashion; tolerably lavish in the way of 'tips,' and always ready (since that cost nothing) to ask for a holiday for him: these things came to the young man's remembrance now, and he forgot, for a moment, to cherish the remembrance of his wrongs as he filled the wine-glass, and put it carefully to the sick man's lips.

'Thank you, Dick,' murmured the baronet in distincter accents. 'I am sorry to have spoken as I did, a while ago. You must forgive a dying man—your father's brother.'

'I do, uncle.'

'I have left you all I have to leave, Dick—the will

lies in yonder desk—and it is more than you think for: you will have nine thousand pounds a year.'

A look of pleasure, perhaps of gratitude, lighted up the young man's face.

'Does that satisfy you, Nephew Richard?'

'It is much more than I expected, sir, and I thank you.'

'Good. That is the rent-roll you will have, if you obey my last request, which I am now about to make to you; if you neglect it, you will have more, but the curse of a dying man will cling to you. Years ago, I won ten thousand pounds of Robert Irby. I desire that that sum—and there is more than that in my banker's hands—shall be paid over to his daughter Kate at once.'

Richard made no reply. Not a sound was to be heard within, save the fall of an ember in the grate; but without, there was a rustle in the shrubs—doubtless the tiny patter of the laurel leaves stirred by the evening breeze.

'Do you hear me, nephew? This money was obtained unjustly, and must be repaid. Promise me that—you—will—do—this.'

'Why not have done it yourself, uncle, during these many years? Why not have made a deed of gift to Kate, as to so many others?'

'You should not taunt a man so near to death,' murmured Sir Nicholas faintly. 'I ought to have done it, but I was proud, and did not care to shew, by doing it, that I had wronged him. Now, all seems different. Richard, as sure as I am drawing near my end, I saw dead Robert Irby's face at yonder window not six hours ago.—You smile, nephew; you think you see a way to keep this money, and yet save your conscience. You will say to yourself: "My uncle was wandering in his mind, and knew not what he said towards the last."—I see by your face that I have guessed aright, and if so, my wits cannot have left me, Richard. And indeed they have not. I know that Robert is dead as well as you do, and therefore that I could not have seen him in the flesh; but I did see him! He came to remind me of the evil I had done to him and his, and to bid me repair it.' His failing breath could scarcely shape itself into words, but still it struggled on. 'I desire to do so with all my heart—with all my heart.'

'It shall be done, uncle.'

There was a twitching of the lips, as though the dying man had tried to smile his thanks, and then not a feature stirred. The mobile face, once instinct with so many passions, was set for ever.

For the first time, in that ensuing silence, Richard became aware that there was a clock in the room; every beat of its tiny pendulum seemed to strike upon his brain, and say: 'Dead, dead, dead, dead!' But though the stillness was grown so oppressive, and the shadow of death lay already everywhere, he bent down his ear to the dumb white lips, to satisfy himself that all was over. He was not unawed; but the worldly prudence, that was habitual with him, soon conquered the unaccustomed horror. Something he had been thinking about since yesterday, after his interview with Kate, but which had recurred to him with greater force within the last hour, was to be put in practice now—at once—if it was to be done at all. The opportunity had been offered to him beyond all expectation.

Rising noiselessly, and treading softly, he crossed the room, and opening his uncle's desk, drew forth the will of which the latter had so lately spoken.

It was the same one which had been drawn up years ago, at the time of Sir Nicholas's quarrel with Robert Irby, and Richard was familiar, thanks to Jem Hoskins, with its contents; but, nevertheless, he ran his eye carefully over them. The witnesses were the landlord of the *Anstey Arms* and Robert Dene.

'She shall have her five hundred pounds,' muttered Richard, 'but not by this will. She shall have her ten thousand pounds, too—when she becomes my wife.'

He threw the will upon the slumbering fire, and presently the tongues of flame began to lap it round.

'She shall have her five hundred pounds,' continued he musing, 'but not now. "Over head and ears in debt," was Hoskins's report, and therefore the more easily won.'

A slight noise at the still open casement made him start with a guilty look. Some leaves of the creeper that hung about it had flapped against the window-ledge; yes, that was surely all. Yet the sweat stood upon his forehead as he turned to listen. True, as he reasoned, he was doing no moral wrong: he meant to give the money as it was willed; he meant even to give the larger sum, in accordance with the dead man's wishes—he would settle it upon her on their marriage: he was going to act not only honestly, but honourably. In the meantime, however, he was committing a felony, and that is apt to make a novice somewhat nervous. Once burned, there was small chance of the will being inquired for. It was not likely that Sir Nicholas had informed 'her Ladyship' concerning a matter that in no way affected her; there was only Hoskins—a man devoted to his interests—who probably knew of its existence. There was absolutely no danger in what he was doing, for who would credit that he would destroy a will that left him all, save a miserable five hundred pounds, merely to make himself sole heir.—But just while the parchment was becoming ashes, Richard Anstey experienced qualms, tremors.

Above the fireplace was a large mirror, that reflected all things in the now ghastly room, except that ghastliest sight which was hidden by the bed-curtains. Richard was looking in it at his own scared and anxious visage, when another and unlooked-for face presented itself therein; it, too, was haggard and anxious, but not scared: a face alive with hate and exultation, and cognizant, if expression ever shewed cognizance, of the unlawful deed in which he was engaged, was peering in at the open window. For a moment and more, Richard stood rooted to the spot—paralysed with terror; overwhelmed with the possible consequences of discovery that thronged upon him. Then he sprang to the casement, and leaped out.

There was no man to be seen. The soft evening light fell only on the grateful flowers, the thick belt of shining laurels, and the quaint old summer-house, with its roof of pine and fringe of fir-cones. Could the intruder be *there*? Or did that rustling in yonder shrubbery mark the course of his fleeing footsteps? If he had fled, would it be well to follow? Suppose this man were overtaken, seized, and given into custody—what tale might he not tell? If, on the other hand, he were in the arbour, would it not be well, thought Richard, to know with whom he had to deal; and perhaps to deal with him? Involuntarily, the young man had snatched up the poker, and he felt that in his now desperate hand the shining steel was a weapon

that could be relied on. The face he had seen was of a man advanced in years, and probably a feeble one, and Richard was not thinking of self-defence.

He pushed open the half-closed door with savage impatience, but the place was empty. The light from its little painted windows played fancifully upon the round oak-table and the few rustic chairs that formed its furniture. Years ago, his uncle had been wont to sit and smoke there: Richard remembered to have had coffee there himself, during his last visit to the Court; but there was not a sign of recent occupation. Was it possible that he had been the victim of some delusion, as Sir Nicholas had been? Or suppose—and a cold sweat came out upon him with this second thought—that Sir Nicholas had *not* been deluded! Of whom was it that that old and haggard face indistinctly reminded him, now that he came to think about it, but of his uncle's friend, Kate Irby's father! And yet that could not be, unless the sea should have given up its dead. That somebody had, in reality, been witness to his recent doings was, however, now certain, for he saw that the flower-bed beneath the window-sill had been trampled upon, and the marks of feet were plainly evident in the black mould.

How changed were his feelings from those of a quarter of an hour ago! What a slip had happened between the cup and his lip! All had then been triumph and security: now, nothing presented itself to his mind but uncertainty and danger. Suppose some one should have entered that room within the last few minutes—during his absence—and found the parchment not entirely consumed! It was necessary to look to this last matter at once, and yet the young man had grown so utterly unnerved that to re-enter that chamber of death was abhorrent to him. He looked in, and all was still as before, except for that ticking, nay, that tolling of the clock on the mantel-piece. He dared not turn his eyes upon the bed, where that dreadful shape shewed itself so ghastly through the coverlet; but, keeping his face towards the fire, he crept in, and heaped the coals together on the few white ashes which were all that remained of that will, he would now have given twice those five hundred pounds to have never touched; then pulled the bell-handle with frantic force, to summon he cared not whom, so that they only came and left him in that hateful room alone no longer.

CHAPTER X.—CROSS-PURPOSES.

So well did Maurice Glyn recommend himself to the favour of Mrs Irby, during that afternoon of their first acquaintance, that she insisted upon his staying at the manor-house to dine; and to combat his unwillingness to leave his friend and host alone at the vicarage, a messenger was despatched to invite the curate also.

Maurice well knew that Milton would not come; but the two had already had an early dinner, and doubtless he did not feel the scruples about deserting him, which he would have done in the case of the more important meal. Moreover, was it not in the curate's own interests that he (Maurice) was at the manor-house at all, and was making himself so very agreeable there? Of course it was. And yet he found himself reiterating that argument again and again in his own mind, just as though there had been some question about it. If his well-meant attentions had been confined to his friend's possible mother-in-law, his conscience

would not certainly have thus disturbed him; but what occasion was there, it whispered, for him to so strenuously endeavour to ingratiate himself with Kate? Surely *that* was the Rev. Charles Milton's business, and not his. The system of wooing by proxy has always been attended with danger, from the time of Athelwold, and doubtless before it, until now.

Even after Richard Anstey had taken his departure for the railway station, Maurice still lingered, and, freed from the restraint of her cousin's presence, Kate's conversation seemed even more agreeable than before. Hers was not the conventional talk he was accustomed to hear from young ladies in London drawing-rooms, but imaginative, fresh, and natural. Her tastes in poetry and fiction were similar to his own, or perhaps rather to what *had* been his own before town-life and the calling of a reviewer had dulled the edge of literary enthusiasm, and made him more observant of defects, less sensitive to beauties. He saw his own mind (of which he had a very high opinion) reflected in hers; and as for the moral sentiments, for these he gave her that boundless credit which it is customary under such circumstances to bestow. The time—soft incense-breathing eve—and the place—a drawing-room, with its French windows opening wide on the old-fashioned garden—worked so well with the opportunity—mamma, behind the only pair of candles in the huge apartment, was nodding over the pages of a novel, and he and Kate were sitting in the twilight by the window-sill—that Maurice almost forgot his mediatorial character, and began to imagine himself a principal. What was worse than all was, that now and then an apprehension flitted across his mind that this young woman was not precisely the character suited to his friend—would fail, perhaps, in making him happy, or (what seemed quite as bad) would not herself find happiness with the prosaic curate. The clock in the old church tower boomed eleven on the silent night, before the guest who had volunteered 'to see the ladies home' at five, rose up to go.

No sooner, however, had Maurice Glyn left Kate's presence than his sense of honour began, though tardily, to assert itself; he still felt the glamour of her charms, but knew that his duty was to avoid being subjected to their influence for the future. He had suffered himself to drift into something more than admiration for the girl, partly, it was true, because that kind of drifting is so pleasant, but partly also from what some people call 'devotion to their art': he was always ready to place himself, without much thought of consequences, in any position which would produce him a new sensation, and thereby enable him to describe it. He fell in love, as some gentlemen, in the interests of science or philosophy, have bled themselves to death; at this stage, he had intended to murmur to himself, the heart beats with such and such rapidity; and at this, a little quicker; but somehow he had forgotten to record his experiences as they occurred; and now he had lost his heart altogether. Under these circumstances, although he was quite resolved to stick closely to the path of honour for the future, and not to trespass upon forbidden ground, he was not displeased to learn from the servant, on his arrival at the vicarage, that the curate had already retired for the night. He did not wish to be interrogated, just then—'And how do you like my Kate?' 'Is she not

charming?' or (more especially), 'Do you not congratulate me on my good-fortune?' That last request he would have found to be a very severe trial of friendship. The executioner may ask his victim on the scaffold for forgiveness for the deed he is about to do, but he ought scarcely to look for approbation.

The curate also had his reasons for avoiding his friend's society for that night. He was equally averse to be questioned upon the events of the day, and he knew that cross-examination is apt to be less strict and searching in the morning than over the last pipe (or two) before going to bed.

Thus it happened that when they met at the breakfast-table, there was just a little embarrassment between them, arising from the reticence which each was determined to maintain.

'I am afraid I deserted you, old fellow, in a very shameful manner yesterday,' said Glyn, as they shook hands; 'but that dear old lady, Mrs Irby (whom you do not half appreciate), would not hear of my coming home earlier.'

'Don't mention it, my dear Maurice; it was my fault as much as yours; and I am glad you found things so pleasant up at the manor. Now that that man, Anstey, has gone, we will be up there as much as you like— But what a quantity of letters you have! Our poor old postman will be demanding an increase of salary if your correspondence continues to be of that extent.'

'Yes, it's a great nuisance: but we poor literary folks can never get away from the printing-press. Most of these are proofs—I have been correcting them in bed, for an hour and more—but I am sorry to say, Charley, there is something worse among them. I have received some intelligence—respecting a certain business matter—which will cut short my stay here, and, indeed, necessitate my going up to town at once.'

'What! You are surely not going to leave me, Maurice, upon the second day after your arrival,' pleaded the curate; 'just when I was looking forward to a pleasant fortnight at least with my old friend!'

'Yes, Charley,' interrupted Glyn, touched with the other's evident regret and pain; 'I think it will be better so; I do indeed.'

'Better so, Maurice! Come, I am sure there is something here which needs to be explained. I do not believe in this sudden call to London. You are not surely annoyed with me because I did not sit up for you last night! It was not very hospitable, I confess; but I was rather depressed and out of sorts.'

'No, no, Charley. It is not likely that I should quarrel with you, after so many years, on such a ground as that; nor, indeed, on any ground; we understand one another far too well, I hope. But there is really a reason why I should leave this place, and the sooner the better.'

'And what is that, Maurice?'

'It would only pain you to hear it.'

'Nay, my friend; it would pain me much more if you left without an explanation.'

'Well, then, this is the whole truth, Charley: I have unwittingly permitted myself to—to feel a greater interest in that beautiful young creature, who, I sincerely hope, will make your life a very happy one as your wife, than I ought to feel. I am more impulsive than you are, old friend, and doubtless not so well-principled, or it would never have happened: but, as it is, it is better for me

to leave Blondel. When you are married, I will come and finish my visit, and be godfather to your first baby; but, in the meantime, I shall go back to the musty old Temple, and work there, instead of in your pleasant home: the loss will be mine every way; and besides, I am afraid that I have already fallen in your estimation.'

'No, Maurice, no,' said the curate, laying his hand affectionately upon the other's shoulder; 'on the contrary, I esteem you more than ever. To flee from a temptation is often as difficult as to overcome it. But—forgive me—how is it possible that within such a very little time you should feel yourself in such danger? It is to me astounding—incomprehensible.'

'And to me too, Charley. I am not naturally tender, nor even tender' (here he tried to laugh in his old way, but there was no music in it), 'with respect to the fair sex; but the half-dozen hours or so I passed with that lovely girl, so simple, so charming'—

'The half-dozen hours!' ejaculated the curate, his Saxon face aglow with indignation; 'you didn't see her for ten minutes!'

'Why, you must be mad, Milton,' rejoined the other: 'I was at the manor-house from five o'clock to eleven—although, indeed, it seemed, as you say, less than a quarter of an hour. Come—it is unpleasant for us, you see, even to converse about this matter. I told you it would only give you pain. I shall go and pack up my traps at once.'

'Stop a bit,' said the curate, in whose honest face amusement and embarrassment began to struggle. 'I think there is a little mistake here. You have fallen in love with Miss Kate Irby, have you not?'

'I don't say that, Milton. But I think, if I staid here longer, I should feel more warmly than is becoming towards one whom my friend hopes to make his wife.'

'My dear fellow, you may feel just as warmly towards her as you like,' returned the curate chuckling. 'Don't think of me, I beg. I give her up to you as Pathfinder gave up Mabel in one of those books of Cooper's that we used to read together, lying on the shady river-bank, in the old May terms at Trinity. To deny ourselves any advantage for the benefit of another, is the greatest pleasure (and, indeed, about the only one) in which we poor clergymen can indulge. Take her, Maurice; I wish you may get her—I really do; and I will perform the marriage-service without fee.—My good friend,' continued he, with a merriment that became almost uproarious, as Maurice stood staring at him with mute astonishment, and not without apprehension for the other's wits, 'I don't want her: it was only your own ridiculous supposition—suggested by that sagacity in all human affairs about which you pride yourself—that I ever did want her. Kate Irby is nothing to me, nor I to her.'

Then, for the first time (so occupied had he been with his own difficulties), the recollection of beautiful Mary Grange, and of the combat he had witnessed, doubtless upon her account, between Anstey and the curate, occurred to Maurice Glyn. He conjectured rightly that Milton had no intention of communicating the details of the latter event, of which he little imagined his friend had been a witness; and chagrined at his own mistake and at his host's triumphant hilarity, Maurice revengefully resolved to prolong the misunderstanding.

'Well, Milton,' said he gravely, 'I confess that I have been utterly deceived, but then I did not think you were one who would ever contemplate a match which the world would call unequal.'

'I don't care much about "the world,"' returned the curate warmly; 'much less indeed, perhaps, than some folk who pique themselves upon being unconventional. But if any inequality does exist, the advantage is not upon my side. She may be poor, but then I myself am not rich; she has the mind of a true gentlewoman; she is sufficiently educated—you would be astonished if you knew how much she has taught herself—she is virtuous, pure, and beautiful. I confess, therefore, I do not see "the inequality" you speak of.'

'My dear Milton, pray, forgive me; I was only thinking of your respective ages. While readily granting all that you have said about her in other respects, Mrs Irby must surely be very considerably your senior!'

'Mrs Irby, Mrs Fiddlesticksends!' roared the curate, and Maurice Glyn roared with him, so that the former could not but perceive that his friend had been only jesting, and put forth his hand at once in token of reconciliation.

'No,' said the curate with cheerful gravity, 'my love is much more lowly placed than on the lady of the manor; I am content with' (here he hesitated to swallow a little pride)—'with her dependant, Mary Grange. But you must please to keep this secret, which you have so curiously compelled me to reveal, to yourself, Maurice; not, Heaven knows, that I am ashamed of my choice, but simply that Mary herself knows nothing about it, and may perhaps never know. I am no accepted lover. She is not one to catch at a man merely because he is above her in social position; and then there is my uncle's consent to gain, which, as you may guess, will be a very difficult matter.'

'I am afraid it will,' answered Maurice thoughtfully, and then was silent. He was calling to mind a certain vulgar, pompous personage he had met once or twice, and to whom, though he was his friend's uncle, he had not found it easy to be civil; who had exasperated him by leaving out his aspirates, or putting them in unnecessarily, as when he congratulated himself (which he did frequently) upon being the harchitect of his own fortunes. Glyn was picturing how this undesirable individual was likely to receive the news, that his only nephew and heir—'a lad as 'ad bin to a tip-top school and to college, sir, and was to 'ave as fat a living as money could buy'—had engaged himself, or was meditating that step, to the daughter of the blind gate-keeper of Blondel Priory.

And the Rev. Charles Milton, M.A., sat silent also, revolving the same difficulty, albeit in a more respectful spirit, in his anxious mind.

TROPICAL SCENERY.

AN extraordinary amount and variety of natural beauty distinguishes that volcanic offspring of the Indian Ocean, which we are in the unaccountable habit of calling *the* Mauritius, an error into which no reader of Mr Boyle's pleasant book must ever again fall.* The climate is so delightful, that one

does not mind an incidental earthquake, or an occasional tornado; but it takes a European some time to get accustomed to it. The mornings are cool, the nights are balmy and refreshing, the twilights brief but wonderfully beautiful, far surpassing any which Europe beholds. Summer is perpetual. Few trees shed their leaves so completely all at once, as to be quite bare. One sort of brilliant plant rapidly succeeds the last; many flower twice or oftener in the twelve months. The palms are all the year round putting forth new branches, and as the young one unfolds itself to tower over the others, the underneath one of all fades, and soon falls. The air is so clear, so sweet, so fresh, that even the abnormally uncleanly habits of the inhabitants of Port Louis, and condition of the town, cannot render it pestilential; and the beautiful indigenous productions of the country, enriching the landscape with unsurpassed treasures of form and colouring, are supplemented by exotic importations which find a congenial home in the favoured soil and the paradisaical temperature. The 'natives,' a wonderful mixture of races, known to the English and French colonists generically as 'Malabars,' are not a 'bad lot,' in the main; though they have one horrible characteristic sufficient to render the most beautiful country on earth unbearable to live in—they are excessively cruel to animals. They have much of the negro jollity and inquisitiveness, and are entirely indifferent to truth. The pure negro element is rapidly dying out of the population, which Mr Boyle regards as a fortunate circumstance, the Asiatics being infinitely better as labourers.

All the country presents the characteristics of the out-of-door life which is led there: the houses are prim, tasteless, half-furnished, the planters' cottages mere sheds, as is not unnatural where the only use ever made of a dwelling is to eat and sleep in it. The religions of the 'native' populations are as mixed and as motley as their origin and their costumes. The Hindu population is sunk in the lowest depths of the very grossest idolatry; it must be 'piled up' almost out of sight, for Mr Boyle calls it 'gross even for Hindus.' It is not surprising to hear that conversion to Christianity goes on but slowly, and is not of a particularly satisfactory kind. The most remarkable demonstration of faith is a festival which proves how spurious the Christianity is these people profess. This fête is Mohammedan in its origin, and is in fact celebrated privately by the Mussulman sect, who look on contemptuously at the 'Christian' usurpation. It is called the 'Yamseh,' which is supposed to be a corruption of the cry of lamentation and wailing over Hosein; and is in fact the Carnival of Mauritius, more grotesque, meaningless, and noisy than such exhibitions elsewhere, but not without the attraction of a strange fanaticism, exuberant gaiety, and the beauty of vivid colouring, abundant light, incessant movement, and glorious weather.

There are two great sights to be seen in Mauritius, and each possesses, apart from its intrinsic interest, that of enabling the beholder to enjoy to the fullest extent the lavish and enchanting beauty of the country. One is the whole process of sugar-making; the other is the 'Chasse au Cerf,' which upsets our ideas very oddly, for it begins on the 15th of May and ends on the 31st of August. The chasse is conducted strictly on the French system, and that at which Mr Boyle 'assisted' started from the Hangar, thus described: 'The

* *Far Away; or Sketches of Scenery and Society in Mauritius.* By Charles John Boyle. London: Chapman and Hall.

Hangar I found to be on a larger scale than I had expected; indeed, in aspect, it is quite a little village. It stands on a cleared space, the forest creeping up close on all four sides. A large flower-bed, with a single palm here and there, and a clump of bananas, took somewhat from its otherwise wild look. A long building to the right, the *salle à manger*; close to this a circular one, the *rotonde*, for the company while waiting for dinner. Beyond this stands the *abattoir*, furnished with dressers, whereon to cut up the slaughtered game—innumerable large hooks, for hanging it, studding the rafters. Round these, several detached buildings are grouped, a host of small cases à deux chambres—a complete camp, in short, into which the guests are distributed by twos and twos as they arrive; and last, not least, the kitchens, pantries, larders, store-rooms, and so forth. From this woodland dwelling, in such weather as the first day of the world's existence might have witnessed, the *chasse* set forth, and through *what* a scene!

First came a dark intricate forest, to be threaded in single file, by a path now winding upwards and across level ground; now downwards, and over greensward; by streams, crossed by rugged trunks of fallen trees, now sluggish and clear, anon brisk and brawling. Suddenly the party find themselves in a grove of the Traveller's Tree (*Urania speciosa*), a marvellous specimen of vegetation, and this seen alone in its grandeur, forming one vast thicket, marvellously imposing. 'Thousands were growing vigorously, hundreds have fallen over and against each other, many leaned forward, broken and tattered, while others measured the ground, and were rotting upon it, in huge disordered heaps of stems and foliage. Our road was the most curious feature of all. It was regularly sliced through, like a narrow cutting of a cliff on a railroad. We passed through impenetrable walls of gigantic interlaced leaves, pulpy-looking succulent trunks, the outer side regularly shaven clean and flat. No part of the tree hung or bent forward, none of the broad leaves waved overhead; the path was hewed solidly out of them. From all this, every now and then, we came suddenly out upon an open glade, across which the sun darted its broad golden streaks, then drew them in again. A mass of black clouds seemed to be still struggling to imprison it. Mountains backed the landscape, the higher ridge gloomily veiled in mist. Once for a foreground we came upon a herd of deer browsing; up went their antlers quivering, as our steps disturbed them, and they bounded away!' Then came a sudden change of landscape; the Traveller's Tree disappeared, the party crossed another stream, and were enclosed in a wilderness of the stern black jamrose. But the dark bounds were more than modified, they were rendered beautiful by long ranks of the wild citron-tree, rising to a height of twenty feet, bearing rich loads of their burnished golden fruit, pendent against masses of polished leaves of vivid green. Again a stream, broader, tamer this time, and a wide cleared country is reached, where the fern grows high, and the grass is rank and long—where there are brakes, but no brambles, and thickets of wild raspberry, a plant delightful to the eye, with its hirsute, prickly, vine-shaped leaves, and scarlet berries with a most refreshing acid, which runs riot through every wood in the island. Here the business of the *chasse* began; but the beauty of

the scene had more charm for Mr Boyle, and he eagerly studied every detail of the landscape around, as he kept his position, close to a singular object. This was a dead tree, quite branchless, tall and straight, standing quite solitary in the open, and surmounted by something which looked like a white, solid, cinderlike sponge, but which really was a nest of the mercilessly destructive white-ant. Just above where this little world of wonderful insect-life clung, sat a bright green parrot, drying and pluming himself, and fluttering his feathers, on which the sun glinted. In face was a thicket of dark jamrose, behind a ravine choking with lavish and gigantic vegetation; on the horizon, the misty peaks of purple mountains.

The feast of beauty afforded by the second day of the *chasse* was even more rich and rare, for it had the grandeur and the music of many waters added to it. The cascade of Dya Mamon stands in the midst of an unsurpassable landscape, and the beauty and luxuriance of the forest growths are impossible to describe. Mr Boyle seems to have been peculiarly susceptible to the sense of beauty in trees; to their mysterious, sympathetic life; to the curious stealthy whispering and watchfulness of them; to that unwritten, unspoken poetry which has dwelt in the forest lords from the beginning, which inspired the pagan mind with its beautiful myth of the Hamadryad, and inspired the great Christian saint Columba, when, in the terribly pathetic lament of his exile, he sang:

Crowded full of heaven's angels is every leaf of the oaks of Derry.

On the heights to which the *chasse* led them, the bamboo grows to an unusual altitude, and in extraordinary luxuriance; heavy masses of the sombre jamrose are mixed up with all this light feathery green foliage; white palms, growing profusely close to the water's edge, finish off the vista with their unequalled, slim, Asiatic grace. Mr Boyle remarks upon the scarcity of tree ferns. 'It is curious,' he says, 'how often one seeks in vain for these beautiful children of the forest. Like many other beautiful children, they are capricious, and you may go on sometimes for miles, and never find one in the very spot where you would fancy they would most love to grow.' Mr Boyle's 'post' was close by the Dya Mamon; at his feet the river spread out into a broad, shallow basin, with hundreds of transparent side-pools, and curling eddies, forming rapids which subside into the enormous green glassy sheet, and slide down a sheer height of one hundred feet. Right opposite to him rose a noble mountain, cone-shaped, and thickly wooded to the summit; true primeval forest, against whose unsullied majesty, against whose lavish beauty, no human hand has ever been raised. 'Across that amphitheatre of trees, for centuries and centuries, sunshine had gleamed, and the fierce hurricane had swept; but as for the interference of destructive man, those green fastnesses rose up intact, un mutilated, as on the evening and morning of that day when God saw that they were good.' There are strange, wild stories current about the falls which bear the uncreole Malagasy name of 'Dya Mamon.' The country about was a favourite place of refuge for the Maroons, or fugitive slaves, in the bad old times of slavery. The wildness of it afforded them shelter and concealment, as long as the pursuit was confined to the masters; but when those hunters of human game called blood-

hounds came to their assistance, no hole, ever so remote, seemed any longer inaccessible.

This is the story of the naming of the falls: 'A Malagash Maroon, called Dya Mamon, continued to baffle every attempt to take him for ten years. He was tracked again and again, and actually hunted up to the edge of the falls, but there he always gave his pursuers, both men and dogs, the slip. One day, when so chased, he was seen to leap the falls, and it was supposed he was drowned; but after a while, to the amazement of all, he reappeared. I could not ascertain what was his reputed end; but, in consequence of the exploit above mentioned, he was given credit for being in league with the devil, if not the devil himself, and was left unmolested. Many years after, it was discovered that a large cavity existed in the rock behind the falls, and was completely concealed by them. Into this it is supposed that Dya Mamon, being an expert diver, had been accustomed to retreat.'

The way back from the chase lay upon the other bank of the river, also wondrously beautiful, and so Mr Boyle had seen divine haunts of Nature which many a transient dweller in the island never sees, hears, or dreams of, but goes away believing that, beyond its skies, Mauritius has nothing to shew but strangely peaked mountains, the eternal cane-fields which he passes every day, and the ravine he does not care to explore. On a journey to the 'Piton de la Rivière Noire,' the highest but one of the most accessible mountain-summits in the island, splendid specimens of the ebony-tree abound. Two kinds are found in the Mauritius woods, and many members of the citron family. The mandarin, the pamplemousse, and the vanilla, which is an orchid, also abound, and the beautiful wild coffee-tree. As they wound their way on foot, the baggage being carried by the Malabars, along the steep uprising path, the scene around was of magical beauty. Beyond lay the blue, sparkling, foam-flecked sea; above, the cloudless azure sky; around, the lavish and magnificent tropical trees. Three-quarters of the way up, they rested, and 'revelled in the view.' Well they might, when even the pale fancy of it which written words can give, is full of gladness and of rest. Three or four gorges converging to a point, their sides densely wooded from where they touch the earth to where they seem to touch the sky; down at their bases, the dark, narrow, serpentine passage, along which the mountain road curved and twisted, looking like a broad black ribbon, and the briskly running stream like silver threads woven into it. Massive sombre tufts here and there lying broadly in the lighter shades of green, which must have been the tops of mango-trees; the foreground a heap of giant leaves such as one only sees in the tropics, and each leaf a grand study in itself. Aloes with their bell-clustered, lily-loaded, wandlike stems. The blending colours of a marvellously vivid rainbow hanging its gorgeous veil over the scene.

The summit of the mountain reached, a vast interminable forest lay beneath them on the other side; so they descended quickly, and plunged into it. The wonderful beauty of tropical forest has no drawback in Mauritius. The song of birds is rare indeed, but the cooing of the doves is constant, and no venomous thing is to be dreaded. Snakes are utterly unknown, and toads, out of the museum, do not exist. No briars, no thorns, no poisonous growths, but innumerable 'healing plants' and herbs fit for food. A rank luxuriance,

a wild unrebuked race of vegetable giants, tangled festoons of creepers starred with the most brilliant flowers, hanging down like strung jewels—these are the accidents, the superfluities of the forest growth, the addenda to the cocoa, and the palm, the breadfruit, the bamboo, the cayenne, the mango, and countless others. There they are, amid the stately trees, and the coils of lithe 'lianes'; each unconsidered thing among them a treasure of price for conservatories far away, but free and far more beautiful in their native home. 'If you look down,' says the writer, treating of the tramp through the principal forest, 'there are green depths as it would seem bottomless; if you look up, there is roof upon roof of an exquisitely variegated verdure, the tall tree fern piercing through the under and densely tangled vegetation with its umbrella-shaped head waving like a coronet of feathers. At times you see the ghastly bared shape of some tempest-stricken child of the woods, stretching across as if to hide its nakedness among the surrounding millions of leafy things. The hope of giving any adequate idea of the witchery of a scene like this is vain. As I write, I think of Mendelssohn's words: "Every man who looks on the like, must thank God for having endowed him with sufficient power to grasp and feel the grandeur of what he sees," and fully feel their truth.'

When the party reached cleared ground, and were walking along the edge of the ravine, they saw an occasional hut on the other side, hardly to be distinguished, so completely had the broad-leaved 'calibasse' taken possession of roof and sides. They also saw frequent specimens of the raffia, a palm whose branches measure twenty feet and upwards in length, and are broad in proportion, and which flowers at a ripe age for the first and only time, then droops and dies, when the long masses of polished cones which have clung to it, fall, and sow themselves, and so replace the parent tree. Amid all this lavish beauty, scarlet 'cardinal' birds flying from branch to branch, glittering like living gems. Quite suddenly they emerged into an open space where a startling contrast presented itself. 'Before us, extending up to the bases of the green hills which rise on two sides of it, lay the famous Bois Sec, a wide flat surface of many acres, thickly dotted with the tall, gaunt, ghastly, utterly and entirely denuded stems of hundreds and hundreds of dead forest trees—some high, some by comparison low, but each and all widely stretching out their scorched-looking, withered limbs. Not a single green tree was to be seen. One might almost have thought one beheld a crowd of giants in the act of raising their bare arms in frantic supplication towards heaven. Various are the conjectures as to this peculiar assemblage of dead trees, these phantoms that look as if they had stalked out of an antediluvian forest to congregate by themselves. We saw the Bois Sec on a dull, murky morning—sunshine would have been far less in harmony with the sublimity of such a spectral landscape. Something of awe crept over me as skeleton after skeleton was shut out of sight by the wreaths of the increasing mist. It was like the winding and unwinding of the lifeless body.' On again into the heart of the forest, where the branches lap over so thickly that the rain is broken in its fall, and the trees form a tented road for the travellers, where everything is green and glittering, a wilderness of beauty, colour, and sweet scents, where the mimosa springs from the centre of the stronger trees, where

huge orchids nestle in the rotting forked branches, and small ones, trodden under foot, give out delicious perfume. Here is an extensive grove of the vacoa, a gigantic tree, resembling the seven-branched candlestick of the Jewish temple. On, on again along the ridge of the Tamarind Mountains, where the woods are yet stiller and more devoid of life, where birds perch quietly within reach of one's arm, and where the wide gorge opens magnificently upon a view of the sea with the islands apparently floating on it.

From the splendid wilderness of the tropical forest, Mr Boyle takes us to the Botanical Garden at 'Pamplemousses,' which he calls 'the Richmond of St Louis.' It covers sixty acres, and has the cloudless sky overhead, no glazed roof, no artificial atmosphere, and no pigmy growth. Here are lines of palms which form a gallery four hundred feet long. Here is a *Bignonia speciosa* which 'might stand alone in an English park, and cut no bad figure as to size, loaded with deep orange clusters, each single flower of the bunch as big as the expanded one of our common magnolia.' Here is the 'flamboyant' or flaming tree, with its crimson flower; and the 'sang dragon' from Guadeloupe, with its gorgeous mixture of crimson and golden brown. Here is the 'bonnet carré,' white, delicate, gigantic, and more beautiful than any; the dillenia, with countless snowy blossoms, larger than the grandest Spanish chestnut-flower, which you may pass by, in its full bloom, and not see so much as a bud. To see them, you must creep under the overarching branches, and there, in 'beauty curtailed from the light,' under the rich green cupola, many hundreds of big white bells, of exquisite delicacy; and within the corolla such a collection of large stamens, all so thickly powdered with their golden pollen, that it seems as if a second flower grew within the petals. Yonder is a grove of nutmeg-trees; near at hand are clove and cinnamon, ginger plant and pepper tree, areca, betel, cayenne-palm, date-palm (which to look at, is to dream of the desert), sago-palm (which to name, is to wake up to the reality of the nursery dinner), the gingerbread-palm, the cocoa, and a host of others.

To follow Mr Boyle from the trees and the plants to the flowers, and thence to his description of the climate, is to receive a succession of impressions of exquisite beauty, and of surroundings amid which the 'mere joy of beauty' might possibly be converted from a poetical myth into a practical fact. He was as fortunate as he was enthusiastic and sympathetic, and fortune favoured him. He explored the beauties of Mauritius thoroughly, and was not, after all, obliged to leave the island with his curiosity unsatisfied in one important particular. He did see a hurricane.

ACROSS THE WALNUTS AND THE WINE.

In after-dinner talk
Across the walnuts and the wine.—*Tennyson.*

DURING a debate upon the Irish Church at Housewife's table the other night, a supporter of the Establishment, while maintaining that the contemplated concession, even if made, would utterly fail to satisfy the Hibernian malcontents, made use of a novel illustration.

'I once had an acquaintance in Devonshire,' said Colonel Thunderbomb—'he was an Irishman too,

by the by (although, of course, he never went over there, and even did his very best to get rid of the accent), who built himself a fine house at the extremity of his estate, and almost next door to another man's farm. He furnished it in a very costly manner, and would have been quite content with the result of his expenditure, but for a certain intolerable stench which pervaded every room in the mansion. People skilled in evil smells assured him it was only dead rats—just as the Radicals are now saying, it is only the Irish Church—but the knowledge of what it was did not diminish the nuisance. My friend, however, acting upon their advice, took down all his fine oak skirting-boards, and took up all his fine oak floorings, and pulled his fine house almost to pieces; but the smell was neither better nor worse, for it turned out that it arose from the farmer's boiling swedes next door, which he could no more prevent, you see, than you could have prevented my friend from being an absentee.'

'A very apt fable, colonel,' observed Housewife gravely. 'But a weak argument, like a dull book, is none the better for being elegantly illustrated.'

'I entirely differ from you,' said Bitter Aloes. 'If artists did but draw less carelessly, many modern books would be well worth looking into. The illustration of an argument also is sometimes of great moment. I once lived in a certain northern metropolis, where two eloquent divines contended for the mastery at every great public meeting. But, as in the game of draughts, the player who has the first move always wins (or ought to do so), so, whoever of the two first caught the eye of the chairman, and rose to speak, was observed to prevail over his rival. The reason of this was, that they were both in love with the same beautiful simile, and when one got possession of it, it of course became useless to the other. It was a complicated logical affair enough, but from long habit they could handle it like a proverb: it had a Ship, and a Rock, and a Light-house in it, with many other interesting objects; and I well remember, as each of these familiar images was presented to the long-suffering audience by the more fortunate of the two Divines, how the face of the other used to lengthen, for he felt that the particular tack on which his ship went best was denied to him, even if the wind was not taken out of his oratorical sails altogether.'

'There is nothing which common-place folks relish like a cumbrous metaphor,' observed Housewife; 'mere reasoning is caviare to the general.'

'And to the colonel too,' whispered Aloes in my ear, with a glance at Thunderbomb. 'He was quoting that very phrase but yesterday at the club, only he said "curare" instead of "caviare." Think of "curare to the general." A deadly poison, sir, in which savages dip their arrows.'

'If that's the case,' cried Thunderbomb, who has very sharp ears, 'I wonder, Mr Aloes, you don't get some to put on the tip, or rather the fork, of your tongue.'

'Oh, as to that,' struck in Housewife, mediocrally, for Aloes was purple, there being nothing which he more dislikes than personal satire (when directed against himself), 'we are all acclimatised to our friend's winged words, and they hurt nobody. Speaking of acclimatisation, how well all the ventures we have of late sent out to the Underworld seem to have prospered! But the advantage

is not reciprocal. We shall never see volunteer kangaroos on Wimbledon Common. Old England seems to resent any introduction of strange flesh.'

'Yes,' said Thunderbomb, laughing, 'even from one county into another. A friend of mine who lives in an eastern county, where no Stags are hunted, thought he would introduce that diversion a year or two ago, and he did so : that is, he did so for one day. But the huntsman, and whips, and dogs, being strange to the place, and one of those fogs peculiar to that locality, and which seem woven of Shetland wool, having come on, everybody got scattered and lost. Nothing was ever heard of the deer at all, and very little of the dogs, except that the carcasses of sixteen sheep that had been "worried" by those noble animals were brought up to my friend's house, and a very ample remuneration demanded.'

'That story is suspiciously like what occurred with the Queen's hounds some years since,' remarked Aloes. 'A certain Eminent Personage, wishing to repay the sporting hospitalities of a county where he had been foxhunting during the season, determined to give it a day with the stag-hounds. A special train was engaged, and brought the astonished Deer, with all his canine and equine friends, at I don't know what expense, and there was a Meet of unparalleled magnitude. The animal, as usual, refused to start, and when he did so, trotted for about six miles along the road, as though he were aware of the security afforded by the Queen's highway; but at last they whipped him off across the country. A stag was a *husus nature* in the district; and when this poor creature trotted into a farmyard (just as he was accustomed to do about Windsor), to rest a bit, and look about him, the farmer, taking him for a wild animal of great price, got a gun, and shot at him. The wounded deer took refuge, not in Hartleap Well exactly, but in the duck-pond, and there he was done to death with sheep-dogs and an iron bar; then the farmer threw the body across a horse, in order to sell it in the neighbouring town, and on his way met the whole cavalcade of noble sportsmen, riding, with hound and horn, at the top of their speed; and the misunderstanding was explained. But nobody has since attempted to acclimatise stags in that particular county.'

'Talking of the Irish Church, from which subject we have strayed a little,' observed Mr Secondhand Funnydog, after many attempts to get a hearing, 'there is a most nefarious attempt being made just now, in society, to discredit that branch of the Establishment. I don't say that Mr Gladstone is at the bottom of it.'

'I have no doubt he is,' interposed the colonel; 'but what is it?'

'Well, an acquaintance comes up to you, and shews you the photograph of a rough-and-tumble sort of gentleman, with an undeniably forbidding expression, and he says: "That's O'Farrel, the fellow that shot at the Duke of Edinburgh." Of course, you say that You can easily imagine it; that he has a most villainous appearance; and that the sooner such folks are put out of the way the better.

"Just so," says the other; "only we have made a little mistake; that is *not* O'Farrel, but an Irish bishop;" which it doubtless is, since among so large a Bench there are of course one or two who are no better looking than other people. It is the latest dodge of the Opposition, and I think it is

rather a good one, since it induces all folks who are not Fenians to commit themselves to a liberal policy.'

THE MONTH : SCIENCE AND ARTS.

AMID all the excitement of politics, of church and state questions, of Fenian plots and punishment of traitors, of victory in Abyssinia, and good news from Dr Livingstone, of the National Portrait Exhibition, the Royal Academy's annual show, and attractive conversazioni given by the presidents of the learned societies, science moves on with steady pace, increasing the powers of philosophy, and the resources of art. At General Sabine's soirée, the great advances made in the application of galvanic electricity was strikingly manifest, and from the improvements made in the construction of apparatus, it was easy to infer, that before long we shall hear of fresh achievements. Among other articles, a newly invented frictionless escapement is well worth notice, seeing that for scientific purposes it is so very important to have a pendulum whose rate shall be absolutely uniform. In this case, the pendulum is suspended on a knife-edge, and the escapement, as it rises and falls, receives and loses a drop of water, which, without the least friction, maintains a uniform rate in the pendulum. It is not easy to describe this ingenious contrivance without diagrams; but for many scientific investigations, particularly those connected with gravity, its use will be invaluable.—Another new invention was Captains Colomb and Bolton's signal-lights, in which an intensely brilliant flash, visible at from ten to twenty miles' distance, is made to appear at pleasure in the lantern. A spirit-lamp in the lantern supplies a feeble flame, upon which a stream of fine powder, containing magnesium and resin, is made to converge by a puff from a bellows, and instantly there darts upwards a flash of dazzling brightness; and with every puff, a similar flash can be produced. These signals far excel those in which the light is hidden at pleasure by an ascending and descending shade; and we hear that they were used with good effect by our expeditionary force in Abyssinia.

Among the rarities shewn by the President of the Linnean Society was an umbelliferous plant, a species of carrot, growing like a tree, some ten feet in height. This curious vegetable is found only in one of the Madeira Islands, where it is supposed to represent an ancient Atlantic Flora; as if it were a relic from the mythical continent Atlantis. Another remarkable plant was the mangrove, of which no living specimen has been before seen in England.

The tropics appear to be unusually afflicted. Before merchants and meteorologists have ceased to talk about the earthquake and hurricane at St Thomas and other West India Islands, we get news of a hurricane surprisingly disastrous in Mauritius. The loss of life and property was great, and the effects of the wind were almost incredible. All the railway stations were unroofed; workshops were blown clean away; the iron doors of an engine-shed were forced from their fastenings, and one of them, though weighing a ton and a quarter,

was bent and broken, and blown across the line of railway. Two spans of an iron viaduct, one hundred and twenty-six feet in length each, and as many tons in weight, were blown from the piers into the ravine below, and trains of goods-wagons were overturned like playthings by the furious blast. To produce such effects as these, the force of the wind must have been tremendous. Where is the anemometer that could measure it?

In a communication to the Meteorological Society, Mr Brumham states his views with regard to what he calls 'predictive meteorology,' and he shews that for the proper development of this branch of the interesting subject certain principles of uniformity and regularity are required. He further shews that in the discussion of mean temperature these principles come into play in a very remarkable manner; and he states that persistent steadiness, and frequently repeated uniformity of monthly mean temperatures, precede extremes of cold or heat according to the season of the year. 'In summer,' he says, 'they precede a severe winter, and in winter they are the precursors of great summer heat.' Mr Brumham supports his theory by tables of the weather for the past ninety-seven years as observed at Greenwich; and from these it appears that when the range of mean temperature in the first quarter of the year has been less than two degrees, the succeeding summer has invariably been characterised by extraordinary heat. Six instances of this have occurred within the period under consideration, and there is but one instance of the summer temperature having reached ninety-five degrees, without the uniformity of temperature, less than one and a half degrees, having prevailed in the winter quarter. Here, then, is a beginning for a series of laws of the weather, and persons interested in the subject may occupy themselves by trying whether they will bear the test of further observation. Other laws are thus stated: When the means from December to March inclusive are above or about the average, the succeeding summer is *almost* always above the average: When the means from November to March inclusive are all above the average (except January), the succeeding summer is always above the average also: When the difference between the means of May and June is about one or one and a half degrees, the remainder of the summer is generally very cold. In a similar way, Mr Brumham shews that it is possible to foretell the winters, and he gives as an 'infallible' rule—when the mean temperature of December is more than two degrees above that of November, the winter quarter (January, February, March) will always have a mean temperature considerably above the average.

Extract of beef is now manufactured in the countries bordering the river Plate, at the rate of a million pounds yearly. One pound of the extract contains the essence of twenty-five pounds of beef. Owing to the high price, the use of the article is confined chiefly to invalids; but as new companies are forming for the manufacture, and the supply of beef in South America is practically unlimited, we may anticipate that by and by the price of the extract will bring it within reach of all classes. For some time past, the Australians have been making experiments with a view to send us their surplus mutton—millions of pounds annually. If they can only succeed in rendering it palatable, they will find here millions of customers. Cobbett

used to say, that the way to make rural labourers contented was, to give them plenty of bacon; perhaps plenty of mutton would keep our manufacturing population in good-humour.

A method of burning waste coal-dust has been introduced in America. The dust is driven by compressed air into the space immediately above the fire, where it burns with an intensely hot flame. The use of paraffine for lubricating the working parts of highly heated steam-engines is increasing. No other lubricant has yet been found to equal paraffine, and, as it will not boil under a temperature of eight hundred and seventy degrees, its fluidity may always be depended on.

Another American invention is worth notice, inasmuch as it is important to all manufacturers who use steam-boilers. It is a bar-magnet suspended inside, between the surface of the water and the top of the boiler, the south pole of the bar being connected with the shell of the boiler, while the north pole is supported by an insulated hook. The effect of the magnet so fixed is remarkable. The incrustation on the inside of the boiler, fur-crust, or scale, as it is sometimes called, falls off, and no more is deposited; and this cleansing effect is maintained so long as the bar is in proper condition. In a very large boiler, it may be requisite to fix two or three bars side by side to produce a sufficiency of effect. It has been found by experiment that during the deposit of scale an electric current passes from the water to the boiler; but that when the bar-magnet is fixed, as above described, the current is in the reverse direction, and that there is no deposit. The effect of the bar is increased by so arranging it that the steam, as it flows out, shall pass along the bar in the direction from south pole to north pole: should it pass in the opposite direction, its preventive action on the deposition of scale is neutralised. If it be desired to produce an effect more rapidly, an electro-magnet should be used instead of a bar-magnet, and in this case a boiler may be cleaned in a few hours, which, with a bar-magnet, would have required weeks. The metal of the boiler is said to be in no way injured by the galvanic action. We shall be glad to hear of this invention being put to the test in this country.

There is an old joke about iron milestones, which may pair with the new joke about wooden paper-hangings. The latter is, however, something more than a joke, for an ingenious Yankee has contrived a way to cut logs of wood into such thin veneers that they may be 'hung' on walls as easily as paper. A log 24 inches diameter yields 125 sheets or rolls, containing 36 square feet each, and the machine will cut 1000 such rolls in a day. A company is at work on the project in New York, and before long we may have our walls wainscoted with mahogany or maple, walnut, sycamore, or any other wood at a very cheap rate.

TO AN INFANT.

Thou camest in sunshine. May sunshine attend
All thy coming and going in life to the end;
And o'er thee all sorrow and heaviness pass
As lightly as cloud-shadows flee o'er the grass.

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